

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 2170

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT EC

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT RODRIGUEZ DEFENDS HIS REGIME

1. SUMMARY: REFLECTING OBVIOUS SENSITIVITY TO RECENT SNIPING AT REGIME BY OUT-POLITICIANS AND PRESS ADVERSARIES, ECUADOREAN PRESIDENT RODRIGUEZ LARA GAVE A MAJOR POLITICAL SPEECH ON MARCH 24 DEFENDING HIS REGIME AND THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY WITHIN IT. THE BUTT OF HIS ATTACKS, AS USUAL, WERE THE "OLIGARCHS", THE "POLITICAL IMPRESARIOS" AND OTHER "TRADITIONALISTS" WHO WOULD RETURN THE COUNTRY TO THE "BURLESQUE OF INTERIM GOVERNMENTS AND CONSITUENT ASSEMBLIES." RODRIGUEZ REAFFIRMED THAT IT WAS NOT THE MILITARY'S INTENTION TO PERPETUATE ITS POWER BUT WENT ON TO SAY THAT RESISTANCE TO GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS WAS PUTTING OFF THE DAY WHEN THE GOE COULD STEP DOWN. END SUMMARY.

2. PRESIDENT RODRIGUEZ DELIVERED MAJOR POLITICAL SPEECH ON MARCH 24 AT DECORATION CEREMONY AT ELOY ALFARO MILITARY ACADEMY IN WHICH HE DEFENDED REGIME. COMPLETE TEXT OF RODRIGUEZ DISCOURSE WAS SUBSEQUENTLY ORDERED PUBLISHED IN NATIONAL PRESS.

3. RODRIGUEZ TOOK OFF AFTER HIS FAVORITE BOGEYMAN, THE
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"TRADITIONALISTS", THE "POLITICAL IMPRESARIOS" AND OTHERS

WHO WOULD RETURN THE COUNTRY TO THE "BURLESQUE OF INTERIM GOVERNMENTS AND CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLIES." CONTRASTING HIS OWN REGIME WITH THOSE OF THE PAST, RODRIGUEZ REAFFIRMED HIS DEDICATION TO THE REVOLUTION, TO SOUND GOVERNMENT PLANNING AND HONEST ADMINISTRATION. "WE HAVE EMERGED FROM IRRESPONSIBLE EMPIRICISM, FROM CRISIS GOVERNMENT AND FROM THE CHAOTIC AND ABSURD USE OF PUBLIC FINANCIAL RESOURCES. TODAY WE HAVE IMPOSED PLANIFICATION AS THE PREREQUISITE FOR ALL WORKS OF PROGRESS; WE HAVE ESTABLISHED PRIORITIES WHICH ARE BEING CARRIED OUT BECAUSE THEY RESPOND TO THE TRUE INTERESTS OF THE NATION -- AND WE HAVE ACHIEVED NOTABLE ADVANCES IN CONTRAST TO PREVIOUS CHIEFS OF STATE WHO, WITH DEVIOUS CONSCIENCES AND THROUGH INTUITIVE AND OPEN DEMAGOGY, DISPOSED OF PUBLIC MONIES AS THEIR OWN PROPERTY INITIATING DISCONNECTED AND UNNECESSARY PROJECTS DESIGNED SIMPLY TO LURE POTENTIAL VOTERS".

4. TODAY, RODRIGUEZ CONTINUED, GOE IS ACTING ACCORDING TO A COORDINATED PLAN WHICH IN THE FIRST INSTANCE IS ASSURING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNTRY'S BASIC INFRA-STRUCTURE -- EDUCATION, ELECTRIFICATION, HEALTH, AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND INDUSTRY. MORE CHANGES ARE NEEDED, HE CONCEDED, IN ORDER TO LIFT THE MARGINAL CAMPESINO OUT OF HIS MISERY, DEVELOP SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN PRIMARY AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS AND EVENTUALLY BECOME A NET EXPORTER. MEANWHILE, HE ADDED, GOE HAS OBTAINED CONFIDENCE OF ECUADOREAN PEOPLE "THANKS TO OUR SCRUPULOUS MANAGEMENT OF THE COUNTRY" AND TO THE "RESPECT WHICH WE SHOW THE ECUADOREAN PEOPLE ... AND TO THE FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN LIBERTIES, ESPECIALLY THE FREEDOM TO EXPRESS ONES THOUGHTS AND TO DISSENT FROM THE IDEAS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE GOVERNMENT."

5. DEFENDING THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY IN THE GOVERNMENT, RODRIGUEZ SAID THAT FOR ALL PRACTICAL PURPOSES HIS GOVERNMENT IS A CIVILIAN ONE "IF WE NOTE WITH OBJECTIVITY THAT HARDLY A CHIEF OR HIGH RANKING OFFICER FINDS HIMSELF IN A JOB WHICH WAS PREVIOUSLY CARRIED OUT BY CIVILIANS..." MOREOVER, CIVILIANS AND MILITARY WORK HAND IN HAND IN THE NATIONAL EFFORT.

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6. COMING INTO THE HOME STRETCH, RODRIGUEZ AFFIRMED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT DID NOT WISH TO PERPETUATE ITSELF IN POWER INDEFINITELY; BUT THERE WERE FUNDAMENTAL GOALS TO BE ACCOMPLISHED AND RESISTANCE TO THEIR ACCOMPLISHMENT WAS PUTTING OFF THE DAY WHEN THIS REGIME COULD STEP DOWN FROM POWER. "WE HAVE NOT COME AS SERVANTS OF SPECIAL INTERESTS ... I HAVE SOUGHT TO FAITHFULLY INTERPRET YOUR WILL...I HAVE DONE EVERYTHING TO BE WORTHY OF THE ECUADOREAN

PEOPLE, WORKING WITHOUT REST TO SOLVE THE HUGE PROBLEMS WHICH PLAGUE US. BUT I AM FULLY AWARE OF MY PERSONAL LIMITATIONS AND CONVINCED THAT ONLY TEAMWORK, ONLY THE COLLECTIVE AND INDIVIDUAL MORALITY OF THOSE OF US WHO FORM THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT ...CAN GUARANTEE THE SUCCESS OF OUR IDEAS AND OUR PLAN. THIS GOVERNMENT, LIKE NONE OTHER, HAS BEEN SINCERE IN ITS SEARCH FOR CAPABLE COLLABORATORS FOR ALL LEVELS OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, WITHOUT REFERENCE TO INTIMATE RELIGIOUS OR POLITICAL CONVICTIONS. WE DIRECT OURSELVES TOWARDS A GOAL IN A WAY THAT ALL ECUADOREANS CAN TAKE AN ACTIVE PART IN THEIR OWN GOVERNMENT."

7. COMMENT: RODRIGUEZ SPEECH, WHILE NOT DEPARTING IN ANY SIGNIFICANT WAY FROM HIS USUAL RHETORIC, WAS CLEARLY TIMED AS A RESPONSE TO RECENT SNIPING BY OUT-POLITICIANS AND PRESS ADVERSARIES WHO HAVE BEEN TRYING TO DEFLATE IMPACT OF PRESIDENT'S TRIUMPHANT RETURN FROM HIS FOREIGN TOUR. RODRIGUEZ REPEATED DEMONSTRATIONS OF SENSITIVITY TO EVEN THE MOST MINOR GRUMBLINGS BY THE SO-CALLED "OLIGARCHS" AND "TRADITIONALISTS" (E.G. THOSE WHO ARE CALLING FOR A RETURN TO CIVILIAN RULE) REMAINS ONE OF THE MORE CONSISTENT PATTERNS OF HIS BEHAVIOUR.
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